

Amendments to the Drawings

The Drawings received December 12 are not acceptable as Figures 3 and 4 must be designated as New Sheets. Attached is a new set of Drawings depicting Figures 3 and 4 as new Drawings.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 14-26 and 28 are pending in the application. Claims 1-13 were previously cancelled. Claims 14-28 stand rejected. By this response, claims 14, 16-19, 22-23 have been amended and claim 27 is canceled. No new matter has been introduced into the application. As explained in more detail below, Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request such action.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112

Claims 14-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 14 has been amended to positively recite the connection between the shafts and cylindrical coupling and to eliminate the redundant phrase.

Claims 14, 16-19 and 22-23 have been amended to delete the usage of the terms “first,” “second,” and the like. Such terms are not needed as each axial height, for example, is identified e.g., “axial height (H1)”.

The rejection further contends that Claims 15-18, 20, 21, and 24-28 are indefinite for depending from claim 14. The indefiniteness rejections of independent claim 14 have been overcome, thus, claims 15-18, 20, 21, and 24-28, like amended claim 14, are not indefinite. All of the indefiniteness rejections having been addressed, the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the 35 USC § 112 rejections.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

Claims 14, 15, 20, 22, 23, 27, and 28 stand rejected under 35 USC § 102 as being anticipated by US Application Publication No. 2002/0013085 to Boyle et al. (“Boyle”).

The rejection contends that Boyle discloses a driving shaft (element 11 of Boyle) and a driven shaft (element 12 of Boyle). In response to the prior arguments, the Office Action states on page 20 “the figures [of Boyle] clearly show this amended limitation as the elastic conducting means is basically a coil spring which Boyle shows. It should be kept in mind that the claim does not set forth “direct contact” and intermediate components are not excluded between the spring and one of its shafts. The spring in Boyle provides both direct and indirect contact between the shafts.”

Claim 14 has been amended to clarify that the elastic conducting means is in direct mechanical and electrical contact with both the axial end extension of the driving shaft and the axial end extension of the driven shaft. Boyle does not teach or suggest this feature. In contrast to claim 14, Boyle discloses that “[t]he bias surface 12c of the center probe rod distal end abuts ball 15 at one end of a coil spring 14 between ball 15 and center probe contact 11.” (Paragraph [0023] of Boyle) In Fig. 1 of Boyle shown below, an arrow has been added pointing to ball 15, which is located between the coil spring 14 and the center probe 12. Consequently, even if elements 11 and 12 could be considered a driving shaft and a driven shaft, respectively, Boyle does not teach the feature of an elastic conducting means directly contacting both the axial end extension of the driving shaft and the axial end extension of the driven shaft.

Moreover, claim 14 has been amended to further recite that the end of the driven shaft is capable of making direct contact with the end of the driving shaft. Clearly there is no possibility of direct contact between the driven shaft and the driving shaft in Boyle.

Consequently, Boyle does not teach each and every limitation of amended claim 14 and cannot be considered to anticipate claim 14. Claims 15, 20, 22, 23, and 28 depend from claim 14 and are not anticipated by Boyle for at least the same reasons as amended claim 14 and for the additional features recited therein. Claim 27 is canceled. The 35 USC § 102 rejection is respectfully requested to be withdrawn.

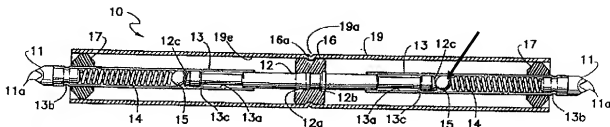


FIG. 1

Claims 14, 15, 18, 20, 22, 23, 27, and 28 stand rejected under 35 USC § 102 as being anticipated by US Patent No. 4,289,367 to Everett.

Claim 14 has been amended to recite that the end of the driven shaft is capable of making direct contact with the end of the driving shaft. Clearly the arrangement depicted in the Figures of Everett does not allow the “driving shaft” to contact the “driven shaft.” Everett therefore cannot anticipate amended claim 14. Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 16 and 17 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Application Publication No. 2002/0013085 to Boyle in view of US Patent No. 4,783,897 to Basnett (“Basnett”). Claims 18-21 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Application Publication No. 2002/0013085 to Boyle.

Boyle does not teach or suggest that an elastic conducting means is in direct mechanical and electrical contact with both the axial end extension of the driving shaft and the axial end extension of the driven shaft. Boyle further does not teach or suggest that the end of the driven shaft is capable of making direct contact with the end of the driving shaft.

Basnett does not remedy the deficiencies of Boyle with respect to claim 14. Basnett is relied upon to disclose the shape of the annular groove and the shoulder to retain the shafts to the coupling, and Basnett is completely silent regarding mechanical and electrical contact of shafts due to an elastic conducting means or any direct contact between two shafts. Accordingly, claims 16-17 are patentable over Boyle in view of Basnett and claims 18-21 are patentable over Boyle for at least the same reasons as amended claim 14 and for the additional features recited therein. Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claims 16 and 17 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Application Publication No. 2002/0013085 to Everett in view of US Patent No. 4,783,897 to Basnett ("Basnett"). Claims 18-21 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Application Publication No. 2002/0013085 to Everett.

Everett does not teach or suggest that the end of the driven shaft is capable of making direct contact with the end of the driving shaft.

Basnett does not remedy the deficiencies of Everett with respect to claim 14. Basnett is relied upon to disclose the shape of the annular groove and the shoulder to retain the shafts to the coupling, and Basnett is completely silent regarding any direct contact between two shafts. Accordingly, claims 16-17 are patentable over Boyle in view of Basnett and claims 18-21 are patentable over Boyle for at least the same reasons as amended claim 14 and for the additional features recited therein. Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claim 24 stands rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Application Publication No. 2002/0013085 to Everett in view of Brighthouse GB-300,037. Claims 25-26 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Application Publication No. 2002/0013085 to Everett in view of Brighthouse and further in view of US Patent No. 6,099,196 to Lancelot and US Patent No. 5,261,449 to Smetters.

Everett does not teach or suggest that the end of the driven shaft is capable of making direct contact with the end of the driving shaft. None of Brighthouse, Lancelot, and Smetters remedies this defect. Claims 24-26 are patentable over Boyle for at least the same reasons as amended claim 14 and for the additional features recited therein. Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

CONCLUSION

All rejections having been addressed, applicant respectfully submits that the instant application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully solicits prompt notification of the same. Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number set forth below.

Applicant believes there is no fee due in association with the filing of this response, however, should there be any fees due the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any such fees or credit any overpayment of fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0733.

Respectfully submitted,

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